

Meeting Minutes
Virginia Board of Education
College Partnership Laboratory School Committee

Thursday, September 2, 2010

Mr. David Foster, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Committee member Dr. Virginia McLaughlin was also present. Dr. Billy Cannaday participated via telephone from Charlottesville.

The committee first heard presentations from four panelists who participated via telephone:

- Dr. John Jacobson, Dean – Teachers College, Ball State University
- Dr. Jay McGee, Principal and Chair of the Burriss Laboratory School, Ball State University and Board of Directors, National Association of Laboratory Schools
- Mr. Glenn Thomas, Assistant Dean, Pk-12 Schools and Educational Programs A.D. Henderson School, Palm Pointe Research School, Karen Slattery FAU High School and Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, Florida Atlantic University Board of Directors, National Association of Laboratory Schools
- Dr. Beverly Warren, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University

Mr. Foster and Dr. McLaughlin opened the meeting by thanking the panelists for their participation. They indicated that the September 2 meeting is a follow up to the meeting on July 21 in that there were additional questions that he and Dr. McLaughlin wanted to ask the panelists.

Dr. McLaughlin asked the panelists about the governance structure of the college laboratory schools in their states and about the level of involvement that the institution's Boards of Trustees have in the school. Mr. Thomas responded that the college laboratory schools in Florida took years to establish and involved legislators, developers, local superintendents, university presidents, Boards of Trustees, college faculty, and student organizations. Specifically, the charter school in Florida has the involvement of a university sponsor, the private sector, and parents. The charter school is set up as a 501(c)(3). For the Florida college laboratory school, the university Board of Trustees was involved in the establishment, as well as faculty, parents, administrators (deans), and student representatives. The governing board of the laboratory schools is set up as a 501(c)(3). Dr. Jacobson indicated that the college laboratory schools that he worked with had a parent advisory committee with oversight from the university Board of Trustees. Dr. Jacobson also provided background on his experiences with charter schools while at Stephen F. Austin University in Texas. At this university, the charter school was directly connected to the university's teacher preparation program.

Mr. Foster asked the panelists, in addition to the entities that were involved with the school, what other entities should have been involved in retrospect. Dr. Jacobson

responded that the schools should be established with community involvement and with the presence of those faculty preparing teachers. Mr. Thomas indicated that there should be a great deal of representation from various areas within the university. The school should be seen as a center for lifelong learning and involve individuals from a targeted population.

Dr. McLaughlin inquired about the percent of teachers within the university who were placed in the laboratory school. Dr. McGee responded that student teachers observe the laboratory school operations much more than they actually teach in it. Mr. Thomas responded that the actual percent of teachers teaching in the school was small but that every graduate of the teacher preparation program had experience observing the operations of the school. The school was essentially a pilot for new teacher training. Dr. Jacobson indicated that the concept of dual credit is important and cited that Indiana Academy at Ball State is a residential high school program emphasizing a mathematics and science curriculum for eleventh and twelfth students.

Both Mr. Foster and Dr. McLaughlin asked about how the college laboratory schools in Indiana and Florida are funded. Mr. Thomas responded that the college laboratory schools do not charge tuition and are considered a K-12 school division. The schools are funded like other school divisions and included in statewide funding formulas. In Florida, there is a class size cap that can make an alternative school an attractive option for an overcrowded local school. Dr. McGee indicated that college laboratory schools in his state are funded in a manner similar to Florida and that transportation is not provided. In Indiana, local taxes are not held locally and all property tax is deposited into the general fund of the state treasury. Therefore, funding follows the student.

Dr. Cannaday asked the panelists if the local school boards in their states have their own taxing authority or if the school boards had to go through local governing bodies in order to tax. Mr. Thomas indicated that local school boards in Florida do not have this authority but that there is a cost of living adjustment for school divisions.

Dr. Cannaday also asked how college laboratory schools were able to 'live within their means'. Mr. Thomas indicated that there is a required local effort component in Florida that is appropriated by the legislature. On-time graduation is important and the state has funded dual enrollment. For the college laboratory school at Ball State, the funding is provided by formula. Other schools at Ball State receive funding based on the school division of attendance. Dr. Warren asked how a laboratory school can be established if no tuition can be charged and no state funding is received. Mr. Foster commented that without ongoing operational funding, it would be difficult to establish a school and asked the panelists from Florida and Indiana whether they likely would have established laboratory schools without either a dedicated funding stream or the authority to charge tuition. The panelists thought that very unlikely. Dr. McGee indicated that funding needs to follow the student. Mr. Thomas also highlighted how some laboratory schools are geared to particular needs. For example, a laboratory school for autistic children can serve as a training ground for best practices. Mr. Thomas indicated that school district needs should guide the establishment of the laboratory school. Mr. Thomas also

mentioned that, with Florida's laboratory schools, the schools fund themselves through a base student allocation plus a capital allocation plus a share of federal funds such as Title I and IDEA.

Mr. Foster also asked questions about capital funding. Mr. Thomas indicated that the college laboratory schools receive a base allocation for capital. The allocation can be used for capital expansion, plant operations, maintenance, and debt service for bond issues made by the university. Dr. Jacobson indicated that the Burris school receives set aside funding for maintenance.

Mr. Foster and Dr. McLaughlin also asked the panelists how the schools were treated, and how they performed, under federal and state accountability measures. The Burris school does well achieving all state standards and "adequate yearly progress" and the enrollment is made through a general lottery. In Florida, the schools also perform well under state and federal standards and the teachers have no set salary schedule and typically make less than teachers in traditional Florida school divisions. There is also a lottery submission process in Florida that does examine enrollment according to student subgroup. The schools use statewide demographic information published by the Florida Department of Education to determine enrollment in the college laboratory schools. In Florida, 1,500 applications were received for 200 enrollments.

The panelists concluded their comments by discussing the need for parental involvement in the schools and the need for an isolated funding stream outside of the resources contained within the university.

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Foster at 4:45 p.m.